



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20451
www.uspto.gov

| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|

09/899,266

07/06/2001

Kouichiro Hara

010863

3929

23850

7590

03/31/2003

ARMSTRONG, WESTERMAN & HATTORI, LLP
1725 K STREET, NW
SUITE 1000
WASHINGTON, DC 20006

EXAMINER

LABAZE, EDWYN

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2876

DATE MAILED: 03/31/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/899,266

Applicant(s)

HARA, KOUICHIRO

Examiner

EDWYN LABAZE

Art Unit

2876

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 March 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) 1 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 1 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

1. Receipt is acknowledged of amendments filed on 3/04/2003.
2. Claim 1 is presented for examination.

Claim Objections

3. Claim 1 is objected to because of the following informalities:

Re claim 1, line 9: Substitute "is capable of reading" with "reads".

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schneider (U.S. 5,168,961) in view of Umeda et al. (U.S. 6,010,064).

Schneider discloses a self-service checkout, which includes a plurality of lockers, each of which is capable of housing a delivered article or foods or groceries and is locked (col.2, lines 58-61), and ten keys or keypad 453 by which numbers are inputted (col.7, lines 53+), also comprising a barcode reader 463 attached to the front face thereof, for reading a barcode written on the article or goods/foods (col.7, lines 52+), and a memory or RAM for storing information read by the barcode reader (col.7, lines 30-38).

Schneider fails to teach a second hand held barcode reader.

Art Unit: 2876

Umeda et al. teaches a commodity distributing locker apparatus, which includes a hand held scanner 60 (col.3, lines 31+).

In view of Umeda et al.'s teachings, it would have been obvious to artisan of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate a second handy or hand held scanner into the teaching of Schneider as an alternative and to read the barcode of the drop off deliveries. Furthermore, the second handy barcode reader facilitates easier access to read the written barcode on the article and can also pass on additional information to the customer as when and what were delivered to the lockers, also serve as key or pass codes to open the lockers for the delivery service when the article(s) are scanned. Moreover, such modification would have been an obvious extension as taught by Schneider, and therefore an obvious expedient.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed on 3/04/2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Re claim 1: The applicant argues that, the prior art cited by the examiner, Scheinder (U.S. 5,168,961) in view of Umeda do not teach the claimed invention (see page 3, lines 13-18 of applicant's remarks).

The examiner respectfully disagrees with the applicant's comments and arguments with respect to the claimed invention "a locker cabinet with two barcode readers/scanners" (see page 3, lines 13-18) is well known in the art that most supermarkets carry two or more barcode readers/scanners connected to the same server and in parallel with each other, wherein one is securely operative onto the check-out counter and the other one preferably portable or wireless or

Art Unit: 2876

electrically coupled to the same server. Based upon the above discussion, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to redesign the above interpretation (the two-barcode reader system in the supermarket) so as to meet the limitation of the claimed invention. Also the examiner considers the result expectancy of the second barcode to be the same regardless the reader is securely attached or electrically coupled to the side of the locker.

Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Perkowski (U.S. 5,950,173) discloses a system and method for delivering consumer product related to consumers within retail environments using internet-based information servers and sales agents.

Mold (U.S. 5,978,772) teaches a merchandise checkout system.

7. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event,

Art Unit: 2876

however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to EDWYN LABAZE whose telephone number is (703) 305-5437. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael G. Lee can be reached on (703) 305-3503. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 308-7722 for regular communications and (703) 308-7722 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1782.

el
Edwyn Labaze
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 2876
March 24, 2003


MICHAEL G. LEE
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800